1: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SS5 Tehuelche SH5

Fitz-Roy (1839, 2: 179) reported that the *Aleculaf* traded pieces of iron pyrites, used for striking fire, to the *Tehuelche*. 372 [439]

SOCIAL LIFE

Marriage and the family.—Direct information is available only for the later *Tehuelche*; our chief information on the domestic culture of the later *Tehuelche* comes from Sánchez Labrador, Viedma, Fitz-Roy, Musters, and Spegazzini. 114

Premarital chastity was seemingly rather strictly observed by girls. They were free to choose their husbands. Fitz-Roy (1839, 2: 152) reported that sometimes girls were betrothed while very young [child betrothal?]. Boys married around the age of 20; girls from 15 to 18 or so. The groom gave presents to the bride's father or parents; these presents were in some measure at least a bride-price; the father or parents of the bride also gave presents of equal value, which in case of later separation were the property of the bride (Musters, 1871, pp. 177–179; 1873, p. 261). The girl was brought by her father or the groom to the latter's toldo, where a wedding feast was given, including mares' meat. It was unlucky for any of the offal or meat of the mares to be eaten by the dogs. The shaman sang and gave advice at weddings. Residence was generally patrilocal. According to Viedma (1837 b, p. 74), a "cacique" always married the daughter or sister of another cacique. [836] 582 583 585 [777] 591

Marriage was usually monogamous. Some men, however, had two wives; rarely three in the later 19th century, but earlier some had "four, five, or even more" (Fitz-Roy, 1839, 2: 152), and even five to eight (Sánchez Labrador, 1936, p. 73). No polyandry is reported (however, see *Pampa*, p. 160); nor is either the sororate or levirate. 595

Wives were generally well-treated as well as loved. Wife beating was very rare. Adultery was not uncommon; in case of unfaithfulness on the part of a wife, her paramour suffered the penalty, not she (Viedma, 1837 b, p. 74). Divorce was uncommon, being usually sought by the wife. A man was not allowed to look toward his father-in-law when in conversation with him (Musters, 1871, p. 184). The aged were respected and well cared for. 593 837 586 606 [88]

Etiquette.—Proper names were not mentioned (Bourne, 1853, p. 160). Hospitality was the rule, to traveling strangers as well as to friends. Certain formalities were observed when two parties approached and came together, including answers to the host's questions before delivering a message (Musters, 1871, pp. 184–185). The relative absence of formalities on entering a tent (Moreno, 1879, p. 236) contrasted with *Araucanian* etiquette in this regard. [551] 576

Cleanliness of body was considered desirable, and bathing in the river was common; there was also a certain ideal of toldo cleanliness; 575 356

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would inevitably starve without a knowledge of the route or guides.

During our stay here I nearly fell a victim to a matrimonial entanglement. A fair young Indian, whose hair cut across the forehead denoted widowhood, moreover having several mares and considerable possessions, to whom I had perhaps paid some slight attention, proposed that I should set up toldo with her. This was quite out of my programme of the journey, but inasmuch as the alliance might prove useful, as well as agreeable, and feeling lonely in the absence of any particular friend, I half agreed; so a go-between was despatched to arrange the dowry, and it was settled that I should give a revolver in exchange for two horses to be provided by the fair one's friends. However, the evening before the happy day on which we were to have been united, the alarm came, and as she belonged to the Southern Indians, I thought better of giving up my arms; so I assigned as a reason for withdrawing from my bargain, that I did not wish to leave my friend Orkeke's toldo. I have no doubt that her people, desiring the help of my firearms, had suggested the match to secure me to support their side. The lady at first was rather disgusted, but soon got over it, and we remained on our former friendly terms.

In this encampment two disagreements occurred between Indians and their wives, which were the only matrimonial squabbles that came under my notice during my wanderings in their company. One occurred between Tankelow and his spouse in our toldo. It began by Tankelow's striking his daughter, which his wife angrily resented; from words they came to blows, and the squaw was getting rather the best of it, when Mrs. Orkeke interposed with a strong arm, and forcibly put a stop to the disturbance.

The following day Tankelow drove his horses off separately, but towards evening a reconciliation was effected. On the 3rd of October we left Gelgel-aik and marched west in the face of a bitterly cold wind. In the hunt not less than seven

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577 522 and the information that she was as alive as ever, only her eyes were bad. I could cite many other similar instances of romancing on the part of the Indians. Old Orkeke I never caught out in a direct lie, and he always, when informing me about any subject, added, 'I do not lie.' In anything of importance, however, such as guaranteeing the safety of person, they were very truthful, as long as faith was kept with them. After a time, when they ascertained that I invariably avoided deviating in any way from the truth, they left off lying to me even in minor matters. This would serve to show that they are not of the treacherous nature assigned to them by some ignorant writers. Nor are they habitually cruel, even to slaves or captives. The Chilian deserters were always well housed and fed, and lent horses to ride; and nothing but their incurably bad dispositions and constant plots brought on them a fate which, in truth, could hardly be thought ill-deserved, whereas the few good ones of the party rose into high favour.

273 152 For my own part, I felt far safer among the Tehuelches, as long as they had no drink or no fights, than I subsequently did in the Rio Negro. Of course when they are drunk their passions become unbridled; they remember old feuds, and at times will fight for mere fighting's sake. It is not necessary, however, to go so far as Patagonia to observe this. The ● 593 152 finest trait, perhaps, in their character is their love for their wives and children; matrimonial disputes are rare, and wife-beating unknown; and the intense grief with which the loss of a wife is mourned is certainly not 'civilised,' for the widower will destroy all his stock and burn all his possessions: thus Paliki, before the death of his wife, was a wealthy Indian; but when I knew him he was poor and reckless, having destroyed all his property, and taken to gambling and drinking in despair at his loss. Casimiro even declared that his son Sam —whom I certainly should not have suspected of disinterested affection for any human being—had ruined himself, and become careless of his life, after his wife's death.

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584 plenty of horses, and prove a highly eligible match for their daughter. The old fellow had been (for him) quite moderate, but this was too much. His rage completely mastered him. He rose up, seized the papposse's cradle, and hurled it violently out of doors, and the other chattels appertaining to his daughter went after it in rapid succession. He then ordered her to follow her goods instanter, with which benediction she departed, responding with a smile of satisfaction, doubtless anticipating the promised luxuries of her new home, the vision of which, through the present tempest, fortified her mind against its worst perils. Leaving the lodge, she gathered up her scattered effects, and, accompanied by her mother, the bridal party disappeared.

593 The chief sat on his horse-skin couch, his legs crossed
578 partly under him, looking sour enough. Presently the bride and her mother returned, and now began the second scene. The chief no sooner recognised them than a sound — something between a grunt and a growl, but much nearer the latter than the former, and in a decided crescendo — gave warning of a fresh eruption. The rumbling grew more emphatic, and suddenly his fury burst on the head of his wife. Seizing her by the hair, he hurled her violently to the ground, and beat her with his clenched fists till I thought he would break every bone in her body, and reduce her substance to a jelly. Perhaps I was a little hard-hearted, but she had been one of my bitterest enemies, and I had a feeling that if some of her ill-will to me could be beaten out of her, I could be easily resigned to her fate. The drubbing ended, she rose and muttered something he did not like. He replied by a violent blow on the side of her head, that sent her staggering to the further end of the hut. This

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last argument was decisive, and she kept her huge mouth closed for the night. There was a silent pause for some minutes, and, without another word, we ranged ourselves for repose. I thought the old heathen's conscience troubled him through the night; his sleep was broken, and he appeared very restless. Early the next morning he went to the lodge of the newly-married pair, and had a long chat with them. They thought him rather severe upon them at first; but, after a good deal of diplomacy, a better understanding was brought about. The young people could hardly get over a sense of the indignities they had received; but in the course of the day they returned, leg and baggage, to the old chief's tent, and made it their permanent abode.

We now moved in a westerly direction, and on the way succeeded in capturing a good deal of game. Their mode of dealing with the carcass of the guanaco is enough to dissipate whatever appetising qualities the meat — in itself very palatable — would otherwise possess. It was no uncommon circumstance, while the squaws were removing the hide, to see the dogs tugging at the other extremity, the women, meantime, crying out "Eh! Ah!" in a dissuasive, though not angry, tone. If the animals become too audacious, the ire of their mistresses is kindled, and they break out with "Cushcurus cushaky!" a phrase equivalent to that which, in English, directs its object to a region unmentionable in ears polite.

The Indians have, strictly speaking, no profane expressions. I never could learn that they worshipped or had any idea of a Supreme Being. The only observance which bore any aspect of religion was associated with something we

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the matter; put spurs to his horse, and told me to come on —"Bueno caballo, se compra, compra." I tried to comply, but it was hard starting the beast, though I used up considerable wind to that end. The chief having got far in advance, and finding me desperately in arrears, hove to, and waited for me. I toiled on, and succeeded in working a passage to his position. He dismounted, inspected the horse's feet, and, directing me to wait his return, rode off. He soon reappeared with a piece of guanaco-skin, which he tied securely about the hoof of the lame foot. I expressed some surprise at this method of shoeing horses; but he said, "Bueno aquetan,"— good shoes,— and the event confirmed his words. The lameness nearly disappeared, and we jogged on together without any further trouble.

While at this camping-ground, the chief one morning arose in a towering passion at some words let fall by one of his wives, and exhibited another sample of the rigor of matrimonial discipline, very similar to that which graced the nuptials of his daughter. He gave her a tremendous beating, which seemed enough to kill her outright; but she took it very calmly, as a sort of necessary evil incident to the married state.

Once more on the move, the squaws taking charge of the furniture and baggage, including the pappooses, and the men riding in advance as usual, to chase supplies for the larder. Game was scarce; we got a couple of ostriches and a skunk, — or a couple of skunks and an ostrich, I forget which, and it makes less difference to the reader than at the time it did to me. We cooked and lunched on the ground and turned our faces homeward with the scanty remainder. The women were busy erecting the wigwams. The ground

invasion by his neighbors. As a matter of fact the unfortunate chief's family does not lose its right to its land, and with the passage of time it often happens that some descendant will re-establish the colony which his father, grandfather or brother destroyed either by bad luck or bad conduct. When a chief becomes old and unable to fulfill the obligations of his position he hands over his authority to a successor.

Marriages are made by a man's buying his wife from her father or from some other under whose guardianship she may be, and in proportion to her rank, good looks, conduct, etc. she is either more or less expensive. Her will is not taken into account for this transaction by her father or guardian, and she cannot set herself against her own sale. Each man may have one, two, or more wives of his own, depending on his wealth, but only rarely does a man have more than one unless he be a chief or an Indian of great power. Three is the greatest number of wives which any man gets to possess, and each husband has the right of selling his wives to another, but this resale makes the woman of little worth, and for that reason she is sold very cheaply: poor men only buy women in this way since they lack the funds to buy them first-hand. It is not considered improper to sell a woman to a relative, unless it be to the woman's son or brother, all other relatives being eligible as buyers. Many are the marriages of this type which are consumated because of the expense involved in procuring an unmarried woman. Single women, while they are yet young and have hopes of being married keep their virginity, but should these hopes vanish, they will have sex relations promiscuously. Those married women who find that the husband who bought them from their father or guardian is to their liking, are faithful, but should they not like their husbands they become troublesome -- yet adultery is not considered a crime unless committed in the husband's presence, and in such a case the adulterer and not the woman is blamed, and even then no punishment is meted out, the husband being easily mollified. The chief always has as a wife the daughter or sister of some other chief, and she is the head wife amongst his others, who must serve her in every way. Even if the chief should tire of his principal wife he may not sell her because it would be considered an insult and cause for an outbreak of war with her relatives. All these head wives are grave in demeanor, given to few words, live secluded in their tents, spend their time in pursuits suitable [74] to their position, and do not take part in the vain conversations of the other Indian women. The men never manhandle the women for any reason, except when drunk, and even in such a condition the chief will never strike his head wife although all the others may well receive their share of blows.